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JEWISH COINS





PLATE I.

Frontispiece.

JEWISH COINS

M. Gasler

BY

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WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

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PREFACE

IT is unnecessary to apologize for the introduction to the English-reading public of M. Théodore Reinach's little work on Jewish coins. Our thanks are due to him, as well as to his publisher, M. Leroux, for permission to publish the translation, which has been made by my wife, and revised by the author both in manuscript and proof. In many respects it differs from the original edition, especially in regard to the *crux* of Jewish Numismatics, the question of the *shekels*. The passages relating to this matter have been entirely rewritten by the author, who has found reason to change his

views. I have also to thank him, as well as Messrs. Bemrose and Sons, for permission to add as an Appendix the greater part of an article, previously published in the *Reliquary and Illustrated Archæologist*, on the current forgery of the Jewish shekel.

G. F. HILL.

*British Museum,
June 1903.*

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INTRODUCTION

ALTHOUGH the science of Numismatics was one of the earliest branches of archaeology to attract students, it has never yet succeeded in gaining the favour of the general public. Their opportunities of seeing interesting coins are rare, and when they hear anything about them it is generally due to the exorbitant prices fetched by them at sales. They are therefore only too readily disposed to regard numismatists as people afflicted with the collector's mania, and their pretended science as a mere hobby to be placed in the same category with the collecting of autographs, postcards, or military buttons.

I do not propose to undertake here the defence of *numismatists*; they are, moreover, far too deeply absorbed in the jealous contemplation of their treasures to trouble them-

selves about the good or evil which is spoken of them. But I should like to protest against the unjust contempt of which *Numismatics* is the object, and to begin by showing in a few words that it is a true science, and one of the most precious aids to historical research.

Let us suppose, to take a concrete example, that 2000 years hence, when the civilization of which we are so proud is extinct and almost forgotten, some scholar happens to find a specimen of a sovereign of King Edward VII. Can we not imagine that with a little perspicacity he might draw from it the most interesting conclusions as to the state of English society at the beginning of the twentieth century?

From an analysis of a bit of the metal he will establish the slightness of the alloy which it contains, and thus recognize the scrupulous honesty of the monetary administration.

An examination of the external appearance of the coin—the flatness of its surfaces, the perfect regularity of its circumference, the uniform thickness of the blank, with its

type and lettering in relief—will lead him to admire the perfection of our scientific apparatus and our mechanical processes ; while he will guess that our coins had a large circulation, and that it must have been customary to arrange them in piles.

Passing on to an examination of the *types*, our numismatist will probably be less impressed by the genius of our designers than by the skill of our workmen. He will become acquainted with the personal appearance of King Edward VII. As to the reverse type, it will astonish him that this coin, bearing the date of the year 1903, should show a servile reproduction of a type of the year 1816, when the “horseman” was first introduced. He will ask himself if it was really worth while immortalizing the name of the author of this rather frigid composition by letting his signature figure below his work, a privilege which in antiquity was granted only to the greatest artists.

Finally, there is the *legend* on the coin. He will learn from it the form of the British government in the year 1903, the name of

the reigning sovereign, if by chance all other historical records of the time have disappeared, the extent of the empire (at least if he properly resolves the abbreviations BRITT. OMN. and IND. IMP.), the monotheistic principle of the national religion (D(EI)G(RATIA)), the ecclesiastical character assigned by the constitution to the head of the State (F. D.), and last, not least, the persistent influence of the classical, especially the Roman, culture on the higher English education as well as the conservative spirit, owing to which the monetary legends were drawn up in an obsolete language, unknown to ninety-nine out of a hundred people expected to handle the coin.

To sum up, economic, industrial, and scientific conditions, the prosperity of the arts, government, religion, national education, there is not one side of our civilization upon which this small piece of gold, for us only a commonplace medium of exchange, may not one day serve to throw light. Now what the coins of to-day will be for the scholars of the year 4000, that the coins of

2000 years ago are for our scholars of to-day—an inexhaustible source of authentic information of all kinds for the vast inquiry which we have instituted concerning the life of the ancients.

This slight sketch is enough to justify the deep study of classical numismatics. But the coins of which I propose to treat here do not possess exactly the same kind of interest as Greek or Roman coins. The coins of the Greeks, like all the productions of that highly-gifted people, are especially valuable for their beauty; they present, in miniature, a complete history of Greek art. As to Roman coins, we have in them, above all, an incomparable gallery of historical portraits. In Jewish numismatics we must look neither for masterpieces nor for portraits. The engravers of Jewish coins were very indifferent artists, and the principal resource of their art, the reproduction of the human figure or of animal form, was denied them by the strict observance of the command in the Decalogue, "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any-

thing that is in the heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth." But to compensate for this, Jewish coins offer, from the very severity of their types, a faithful picture of the profoundly religious but indifferently artistic people who created them. The characters in which the legends are written are of the greatest interest as regards the history of the alphabet. Even the variations in the inscriptions and types, however restricted the circle in which they move, reflect the different influences under which Judaism has passed, with its alternations of independence and servitude, of enthusiasm and apathy. Finally, there are many coins, both among Jewish coins properly so called, and among the Greek or Roman coins which relate to events of Jewish history, which throw light upon and complete or correct the information possessed by historians. If we add, to quote M. Renan, that Jewish numismatics offers enormous difficulties of classification, and that the attraction of a difficulty to overcome is quite sufficient to interest the scholar apart from

the gain of any positive result,¹ we shall admit that this study is perhaps well worth the quarter of an hour's trouble which Pascal refused to philosophy.

¹ Principal works on Jewish numismatics (over and above the general treatises of Eckhel, Mionnet, Lenormant, and Head): Perez Bayer, *De numis hebraeo-samaritanis* (1781), etc. Cavedoni, *Numismatica biblica* (1849). De Saulcy, *Recherches sur la numismatique judaïque* (1854). Levy, *Geschichte der jüdischen Münzen* (1862). Madden, *History of Jewish Coinage* (1864; 2nd edition in 1881 under the title: *Coins of the Jews*). Merzbacher, *Untersuchungen über alte hebräische Münzen* (*Zeitschrift für Numismatik*, Berlin, 1876 foll.). Zuckermann, *Ueber talmudische Münzen und Gewichte*, Berlin, 1862. And numerous articles by these authors and others (Garrucci, De Vogüé, Reichardt, von Sallet, Graetz, Hamburger), scattered about in the different Reviews devoted to numismatics, archaeology, etc. An almost complete bibliography for the years 1849 to 1879 will be found in the second edition of Madden, which may be regarded as a Corpus, though his classification still leaves much to be desired. A good summary of the subject is the article of Mr. A. R. S. Kennedy (Money) in the *Edinburgh Dictionary of the Bible* by Hastings and others (vol. iii., 1900).

ERRATA.

Page 7, note 2 : for ἀφείλετε read ὀφείλετε.

Page 16, note 1, *ad fin.* : for “abolished” read “celebrated.”

Page 22, note 1 : read “Ketuboth.”

Page 45, for “*was the independence . . . question*” read “*was the last hope of the independence of Israel destroyed.*”

JEWISH COINS

I

THE history of Jewish coinage does not begin before the Maccabaeon period. The reason is obvious. During the greater part of the existence of the old kingdoms of Israel and Judah coined money was unknown; the invention of this medium of exchange is usually and rightly attributed to the Lydian kings, in the course of the seventh century B.C. For a long time the use of it was restricted to the basin of the Archipelago, especially to Lydia and Ionia. Before it had reached the interior of Asia, the kingdom of Judah was destroyed by the Babylonians (587 B.C.); the northern realm had disappeared more than a century before.

So there is no room for a national Jewish coinage in the time of the first Temple.

When the Jews were allowed by the Persian kings to return to their old homes and to rebuild the Temple of Jerusalem, the use of coined money was beginning to spread all over Asia; but then another obstacle sprang up to prevent the Jews from striking money of their own. The right of coinage was considered by the ancients as the exclusive privilege of independent communities; it may be said to have been the touchstone of sovereignty. In the vast extent of the empire of the Achaemenidae, very few princes and townships were allowed or usurped such a privilege, nor is there any record of the Jews having ever obtained or even solicited it. Their small community enjoyed practically the use of their own laws and of their own religion under the guidance of a high priest; but they were bound to pay tribute, and were strictly subjected to the authority of the Persian satraps. Moreover, as they were neither a rich nor a trading people, the want of a special coinage did

not arise among them; they were easily content with using the coins which formed the common circulation in south-west Asia. These were the gold *darics* (Pl. I. 1) and silver *shekels* (sigloi) (Pl. I. 2) used by the Achaemenidae, and perhaps also the *shekels* of Phoenician standard issued from the second half of the fifth century by some large commercial cities of the Syrian coast (Pl. I. 3, 4). The Macedonian conquest (332 B.C.) did not alter this state of things. Judaea remained a tributary community as well under the conqueror himself as under the Macedonian dynasties which, after his death, ruled successively over Southern Syria: the Ptolemies in the third century B.C., the Seleucidae from the beginning of the second. The only change was, that instead of Persian gold and silver, the medium of exchange now consisted of the gold staters, silver tetradrachms and drachms of Alexander, of the Ptolemies, and of the Seleucidae (Pl. I. 5).

The reader will therefore readily understand why no weight can be laid on any late Jewish stories which mention coins of

Abraham, Joshua, David or Mardocheus;¹ these are nothing more than fancy tales, which even their authors hardly meant to be taken seriously. As to the numerous verses in Scripture which mention payments in shekels, minas or talents in the time of the Kings, Judges or Patriarchs, so far as they are not corrupted by more recent interpolations, they must be understood of *weighed ingots*, not of coined money: the name *shekel*—equivalent to the Greek stater—denoted a *weight unit* (itself the fiftieth part of the mina, which is the sixtieth of a talent) before it was used to signify a *coin* of the same weight. And in all important transactions the balances had been employed for the weighing of the precious metals used as a medium of exchange, ever since the system of single barter had been forsaken as too inconvenient. In the sacred books written during the time of the second Temple, shekels are rarely mentioned; the currency

¹ Bereshit Rabba, 39; Talmud Bab. Babakamma, 97, etc.

consists of darics and drachms; these are foreign, not Jewish coins.

The Jews would never perhaps have thought of issuing a national coinage, had it not been for the political changes brought about by the persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes (Pl. I. 5). This caricature of Joseph II., as he has been well called, in seeking to enforce Hellenism and the Greek religion on all his subjects by methods of violence, instead of letting time and civilization have their own way, provoked a violent reaction of national sentiment in Judaea. A family of heroes, the Maccabees or Hasmonaeans, took the lead of the patriotic and religious movement, and after an eventful strife of thirty years (168–138 B.C.) succeeded not only in ensuring to their brethren the free exercise of their religion, but also in shaking off the political yoke of the Seleucidae and becoming the chiefs of a semi-independent state. This triumph was due partly to the military talents and warlike achievements of the three brothers, Judas (167–161), Jonathan (161–143), and Simon

(143-135); partly to their political skill and early alliance with Rome; last, but not least, to the internal quarrels of the Seleucidae. The successive pretenders to the Syrian crown, always in need of troops and money, purchased the co-operation of the Jewish chieftains by concession after concession, culminating in the final resignation of all but a nominal suzerainty over the Jewish commonwealth.

It is essential to our subject to state briefly, and date as exactly as possible the successive steps which led to the political emancipation of the Jewish state.

The Hasmonaeen insurrection began in 168 B.C. After six years' hard fighting, in 162 B.C., the first object of the national party was obtained by the agreement concluded with the regent Lysias, subsequently to the death of Antiochus Epiphanes. By this agreement the Jews were granted the free exercise of their creed, and the fantastic schemes of religious unification were given up by the Syrian government (1 Macc. vi. 60; 2 Macc. i. 25, 31).

In 153 or 152 B.C. King Alexander Balas appointed the head of the national party, Jonathan, to be high priest of the Jews. He also conferred upon him a high title in the court hierarchy, viz. that of "friend of the King" (1 Macc. x. 20). This was changed in 150 B.C. to the still more eminent dignity of "first friend of the King," and Jonathan was named governor and prefect¹ of Judaea (1 Macc. x. 65). In this way the Hasmonaean partisan became practically the master of his native country, but he held the position only in the quality of a Seleucid official, revocable *ad nutum*.

A few years later (145 B.C.) a new king, Demetrius II., not only recognized the power of Jonathan, but enlarged the territory of Judaea and granted to the Jews, against a lump sum of 300 talents, the exemption from tribute² (1 Macc. xi. 34). This was confirmed

¹ στρατηγὸς καὶ μεριδάρχης.

² If the exemption was complete, how could he write two years later (xiii. 39), ἀφίεμεν τὸν στέφανον ὃν ἀφείλετε? The answer seems to be that all taxes were abolished except the golden crown to be paid upon the investiture of a new

in 143 B.C. when Simon succeeded Jonathan. Demetrius gave him the titles of high priest and friend of the King (xiii. 39 ; xiv. 38), and granted the Jews for ever exemption from all taxes, even the crown tax. Shortly after, the Syrian garrison of the citadel of Jerusalem surrendered. In September 141 B.C., Simon was solemnly proclaimed perpetual high priest, general and prince of the Jews¹ (1 Macc. xiv.).

Lastly, in 139–8 B.C., Demetrius having been taken prisoner by the Parthians, his brother Antiochus VI. Sidetes, who was then living in Rhodes, hurried to assume the crown of Syria. Even before taking ship, he wrote to Simon not only to confirm to him all the privileges granted by his predecessors, and especially the exemption from tribute, but also to add, as a supreme gift, the right of coining money with his own dies (1 Macc. xv. 5, 6).²

high priest ; in fact, when Simon succeeded Jonathan he sent the customary crown to Demetrius (xiii. 37).

¹ ἀρχιερεύς, στρατηγός, ἐθνάρχης.

² νῦν οὖν ἵστημί σοι πάντα τὰ ἀφαιρέματα, ἃ ἀφῆκάν σοι οἱ πρὸ ἐμοῦ βασιλεῖς, καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα δόματα ἀφῆκάν σοι, καὶ

Such being the progress of events, the question arises : What year can be considered as marking the definite emancipation of the Jewish state ?

The first book of Maccabees informs us that when, on the accession of Simon, Demetrius renewed in his favour the privileges granted to Jonathan, and abolished all Seleucid taxes in Judaea, this was the end of the heathen yoke ; in consequence the current year, the 170th of the Seleucid era (143–142 B.C.), was declared “the first of liberty” (1 Macc. xiv. 41–42), and all deeds were henceforth dated by the year of Simon’s pontificate. Three years later this computation was still in use, for when Simon’s title was proclaimed perpetual, the solemn covenant drawn up on that occasion (172 Seleuc. = 141–140 B.C.) was dated “third year of Simon’s pontificate” (1 Macc. xiv. 27).

It seems, however, that even then the attainment of national autonomy was felt to

ἐπέτρεψά σοι ποιῆσαι κόμμα ἴδιον νόμισμα τῇ χώρᾳ σου,
Ἱερουσαλὴμ δὲ καὶ τὰ ἅγια εἶναι ἐλεύθερα.

be incomplete : a state deprived of the right of coining its own money could not, in the ideas of the ancients, be considered as really autonomous. When, in 139 or 138 B.C., Antiochus VI. gave up this last prerogative, we are led to believe, first, that the Jews had long been requesting the grant ; second, that they hastened to avail themselves of it ; and third, that the political importance of that final victory was well appreciated by them and left some trace in their public documents. Let us see whether such is actually the case.

There exists a remarkable series of heavy silver coins of the Phoenician standard—whole pieces of the weight of 14 grammes, half-pieces of 7 grammes—which have come down to us in a fairly large quantity, especially from two large hoards, found, one in Jerusalem, the other in Jericho. The fabric of these coins is rather thick, not flat and spread like the regal coins of the same standard ; the workmanship is fair, but heavy and summary. The types are, on the obverse a jewelled cup or chalice, on the reverse a

branch of lily with three flowers.¹ The legends, written in the old Hebrew character, commonly but improperly called *Samaritan*, read :—

Obverse.—Shekel Israël (shekel of Israel) ; (on the half-piece, *hatzi ha shekel* [*i. e.* half-shekel]).

Reverse. — Yerushalem ha - Kedoshah² (Jerusalem the holy). (Plate II. 1, 2.)

Above the reverse type is inscribed a date expressed by a numeral letter which (except for year 1) is preceded by the letter *shin*, initial of *shenath* (year). The dates go from 1 to 5, but the shekels of the fifth year are extremely rare and of hasty workmanship; and there are no half-shekels of this year. Some pieces of the years 3 and 4 are in bronze; but most likely they were destined to receive a coating of silver: they are, like so many pieces of that sort, an official forgery.

That these shekels and half-shekels are a Jewish currency needs no demonstration, but

¹ Earlier numismatists described the types as “a pot of manna” and “Aaron’s rod budding.”

² On coins of the first year the article is omitted.

there has been much controversy among numismatists as to the precise date to which they belong, opinions varying between the time of Alexander the Great (330 B.C.), nay of Ezra, of Gabinius (57-53 B.C.), and of the first revolt of the Jews against the Romans (66-70 A.D.). However, the majority of scholars since Eckhel agree in attributing them to the time of Simon Maccabaeus, and after duly reconsidering the question, I concur in that doctrine.¹ The chief reasons for not descending so low as the first revolt is the archaic aspect of the coins, their standard (which in 70 A.D. was obsolete, the last Tyrian shekels being of 56 A.D.), the fact that not a single specimen of the shekels ever found was re-struck on a Roman coin, and, lastly, the impossibility of explaining, on this opinion, the existence of shekels of *year 5*; for the revolt cannot really be said

¹ In the first edition of this book I pronounced in favour of the attribution to the first revolt (proposed formerly and briefly by Ewald), and I was followed in this heresy by Imhoof, Babelon, and Kennedy, not always with due acknowledgment of my priority (*e.g.* Kennedy, *loc. cit.* p. 430). However, *dies diem docet*.

to have triumphed before Eloul (September) 66 A.D., and was completely crushed in September 70, lasting therefore only four years.

Now, if we dismiss the time of the first revolt, there is no other period in the history of the Jews before that date that fits exactly the requirements of this coinage, except the time of Simon Maccabaeus and John Hyrcanus. Judaea was then a free state, it had just been authorized to strike money of its own, and by money, in that time, can only be meant silver money—the grant of a bronze currency being too insignificant to be recorded.¹ To be sure, the fabric of our shekels differs widely from that of the Seleucid coins of the period, but the fact is in no way extraordinary. The Jews started a new mint, an entirely new coinage, and it is only natural that they endeavoured to give it a quite peculiar, a national character, as well in its exterior aspect as in its types and legends.

It is to be observed that the dates inscribed

¹ Even under the despot Antiochus IV., Phoenician towns were allowed to coin in bronze.

on the Jewish shekels cannot be counted from the first year of Simon's pontificate (143-142 B.C.). For, in the first place, Simon could not possibly, without giving offence, have struck coins five years before receiving permission to do so ; and secondly, if this was really the case, we should arrive at the ridiculous conclusion that Simon left off coining precisely in the year (sixth year of his pontificate) when he was allowed to coin ! The inference is that the era employed on the coins is not the "era of liberty," beginning 143-142 B.C., but what may be termed the "era of full sovereignty," the origin of which was precisely the rescript of Antiochus Sidetes granting to the Jews the crowning privilege of a national coinage. The substitution of this new era for the "era of liberty," introduced but a few years before, is not as astonishing a fact as might be supposed. Ancient history, nay Jewish history itself, offers several parallels ; and even during the French Revolution, the era of 1789 (first year of liberty) was promptly superseded by the era of 1792 (first year of the Republic).

Not only do the Jewish shekels acquaint us with the interesting fact—unknown to historians—that the concession of the right of coinage became the starting-point of a new era in Jerusalem, but they also allow us to settle the date of an important event, the capture of Jerusalem by Antiochus Sidetes.

As is well known from Josephus, the friendly relations between Antiochus and Simon soon came to an end. Simon had been dispensed from the payment of tribute for Judaea and the annexed districts of Samaria, but not for the towns that he had lawlessly occupied outside the boundaries of Judaea proper (Joppa, Gadara), nor for the citadel of Jerusalem. Antiochus having summoned Simon either to pay this tribute or to give up the places in question, Simon refused; so Antiochus repealed all his former concessions¹ and began hostilities (1 Macc. xv. 27). At first they proved unsuccessful, but after Antiochus had crushed his competitor Tryphon and settled the affairs of his realm, he renewed the war against

¹ ἠθέτησε πάντα ὅσα συνέθετο αὐτῷ τὸ πρότερον.

John Hyrcanus, who, in the interval (Feb. 135 B.C.), had succeeded his father Simon. Jerusalem was besieged, and after an obstinate resistance, which is commonly believed to have lasted at least a year,¹ obliged to capitulate. On the date of these events we have two conflicting statements. According to Josephus, the *invasion* of Antiochus took place "in the fourth year of his reign and the first of Hyrcanus's," that is, in 136–135 B.C.² So the *siege* may have begun towards August 135, and ended some time after October 134. On the other hand, Porphyrius, in the Armenian version of Eusebius's Chronicle,

¹ For the siege had already lasted some time when there occurred the heavy rainfalls, *δυομένης πλειάδος* (November), and towards the end of it the Feast of Tabernacles (October) was abolished. (Josephus, xiii. 8, 2.) But see further, p. 18, note.

² And not 135–134 B.C. as Schürer puts it (third edition, i. 259, and so too Bevan, *House of Seleucus*, ii. 239). The first year of Hyrcanus is certainly 136–135, as Simon (1 Macc. xvi. 14) was killed in Shebath (February) 177 Sel. = 135 (the Jewish Seleucid year 177 began April 136). This agrees with the fact that Antiochus's accession took place in 174 Sel. (1 Macc. xv. 10), viz. 139–138 B.C. So Antiochus's fourth year is 136–135, identical with Hyrcanus's first year.

gives as the date of the capture of Jerusalem the third year of the 162nd Olympiad, viz. 130–129 B.C., and in the text of Josephus himself we read that the invasion of Antiochus fell in the second year of that same Olympiad (131–130), which would give the same year, 130–129, for the surrender of the town. For intrinsic reasons—a siege of four years being out of the question—the credibility of this late date has been often contested, and it has been suspected that an error of one unit (Ol. 162 instead of 161) has crept into the text of Eusebius and of Josephus. I think that the coins allow us to solve the question. If we admit as probable that the coinage began in the very year when it was granted, viz. April 139–138 B.C., then we have the following concordance:—

Year 1 of the coins.	174 Seleuc.	April 139	to April 138 ¹
2 "	175 "	" "	138 " 137
3 "	176 "	" "	137 " 136
4 "	177 "	" "	136 " 135
		(February 135, death of Simon).	
5 "	178 Seleuc.	April 135	to April 134

¹ Although in the time of Josephus there were really two "new years" among the Jews, one for civil purposes

The coins of the first four years belong to Simon, those of the fifth to John Hyrcanus. They are few in number and rude in execution, as may be expected from the circumstances of the war and siege, when they were struck. No coins are known of year 6, viz. after April 134. This proves that the surrender of Jerusalem occurred *at the latest* in the course of that year, and vindicates the first date of Josephus, against his own contradictory statement and the testimony of Porphyrius.¹

in October, one for religious in April, it seems advisable to consider the monetary year, in the time of Simon, as beginning in April, such being undoubtedly the mode of reckoning in the first book of Maccabees.

¹ As Josephus does not give the slightest hint as to the duration of the siege, and even says that on account of the mass of inhabitants provisions speedily grew scanty (§ 240 Niese), it is not impossible that the events recorded by him are not put in a strictly chronological order, so that the Feast of Tabernacles, mentioned § 241, may be *anterior* to the rainfall of November, § 237. I even consider this arrangement as probable, for otherwise the historian ought to have mentioned *two* feasts (October 135 and October 134) instead of one. So I am inclined to adopt the following chronology:—

February 135. Death of Simon. John Hyrcanus accedes.

March 135. Invasion of Antiochus VI.

Summer 135. Antiochus lays waste the country and begins the siege of Jerusalem.

October 135. Feast of Tabernacles.

November —. Heavy rainfalls.

Before April 134. Surrender of Jerusalem.

II

IN spite of his reputation for mildness and piety which had made him popular with the Jewish people, the conditions imposed by Antiochus Sidetes upon the vanquished Jews were hard enough : their capital was to be dismantled, hostages given, and a heavy tribute paid for the non-Jewish towns left in their possession. To these clauses, mentioned by Josephus, the testimony of the coins allows us to add one that he omits : the right of coining silver was withdrawn from the Jews, or rather, as it had already been snatched from them *inter alia* on the first rupture between Antiochus and Simon, it was not given back to them. If patriotic Jews objected to handle, and especially to use for the Temple fund, coins bearing the effigies of the Seleucid kings, they were soon offered a new alternative. Very few years after the surrender of Jeru-

saalem, in 126 B.C., when the civil war was waging between the sons of Demetrius II. and the usurper Alexander Zebinas, the wealthy town of Tyre seems to have snatched from one of the pretenders to the throne the practical acknowledgment of its independence and the right to issue a silver coinage of its own. The Tyrian coinage, which lasted for almost two centuries, consists mostly of shekels (staters), bearing as types the head of the town god Heracles and the Ptolemaic eagle; their legend, "Tyre, the holy and inviolable,"¹ seems to be imitated from the *Yerushalem Kedoshah* of Simon's shekels (Pl. II. 3). The dates are reckoned from the new era of 126 B.C. These coins, notwithstanding their heathen types and Greek lettering, were of so exact a weight and so good an alloy that they enjoyed a large circulation in Judaea, and were even officially adopted as "sacred money"; that is to say, the rabbis decided that the annual head-tax of one shekel due from every Israelite to the

¹ Τύρον ἱερᾶς καὶ ἀσύλου.

Temple treasury was to be paid in *Tyrian money*.¹

The abolition of the national Jewish coinage was not, however, a complete one. As a sort of crumb of comfort, of little significance, and involving nothing like actual independence, the Jewish high priest was allowed to coin small bronze coins, evidently destined for local circulation only. Although the Seleucid power declined constantly, owing to the advance of the Parthians and Arabs, and the eternal civil strife and general anarchy; although from about 104 B.C. the Hasmonaean high priest took the title of king, at least with regard to his heathen subjects; although under John Hyrcanus (135–104), Judas Aristobulus (104–103), Alexander Jannaeus (103–76) and his widow Queen Alexandra Salome (76–67), the Jewish might expanded in every direction, and grew little by little to a kingdom comparable to that of David and Solomon;—never did the Hasmonaean kings try to revive the regal right of coining

¹ Mishna Bekhoroth, viii. 7; Tosefta Kebuboth, xii., towards end (undoubtedly after older sources).

silver which Simon and John had enjoyed for a few years. Nay, from 64 B.C., after the Roman suzerainty had succeeded in Syria the Seleucid rule, it seems that even the right of coining bronze was for a time withdrawn from the Jews, for there are no certain coins of the high priest and "ethnarch," John Hyrcanus II. (63-40), and those of the last Hasmonaean, Antigonus (40-37), were struck under the Parthian protectorate and in defiance of the Roman supremacy.

A fairly large number of bronze coins of the Hasmonaean have been preserved to us. They are of different modules, the largest being the latest. Their types conform scrupulously to Mosaic tradition, and represent none but inanimate objects, for though the Jews did not scruple to make use, even for sacred dues,¹ of coins with figures on them, struck by heathens, they would on the other hand have felt they were transgressing the prohibition of the Deca-

¹ It seems probable, however, that once thrown into the Temple treasury, all gold and silver coins were melted down and transformed into ingots.

logue if they had themselves struck coins of this kind. The types of these bronze coins are rather insignificant, and borrowed for the most part from the contemporary coins of the Ptolemies or the Seleucidae; an olive wreath, a cornucopiae,¹ flower, anchor, star, palm.² As to the legends, these fall into two classes. On the most ancient coins, like those of John Hyrcanus I. (Pl. II. 4, 5) and of Judas Aristobulus (Pl. II. 6), as well as on some coins belonging to their successors, the legend is purely Hebrew, and expressed in the following forms: "N . . . (*Jehochanan* or *Jehudah*) *Hakkohen Haggadol Vecheber Hajehudim*," i. e. "X . . . High Priest and the Commonwealth of the Jews." We also sometimes find *Rosh Cheber*, "Head of the Commonwealth."

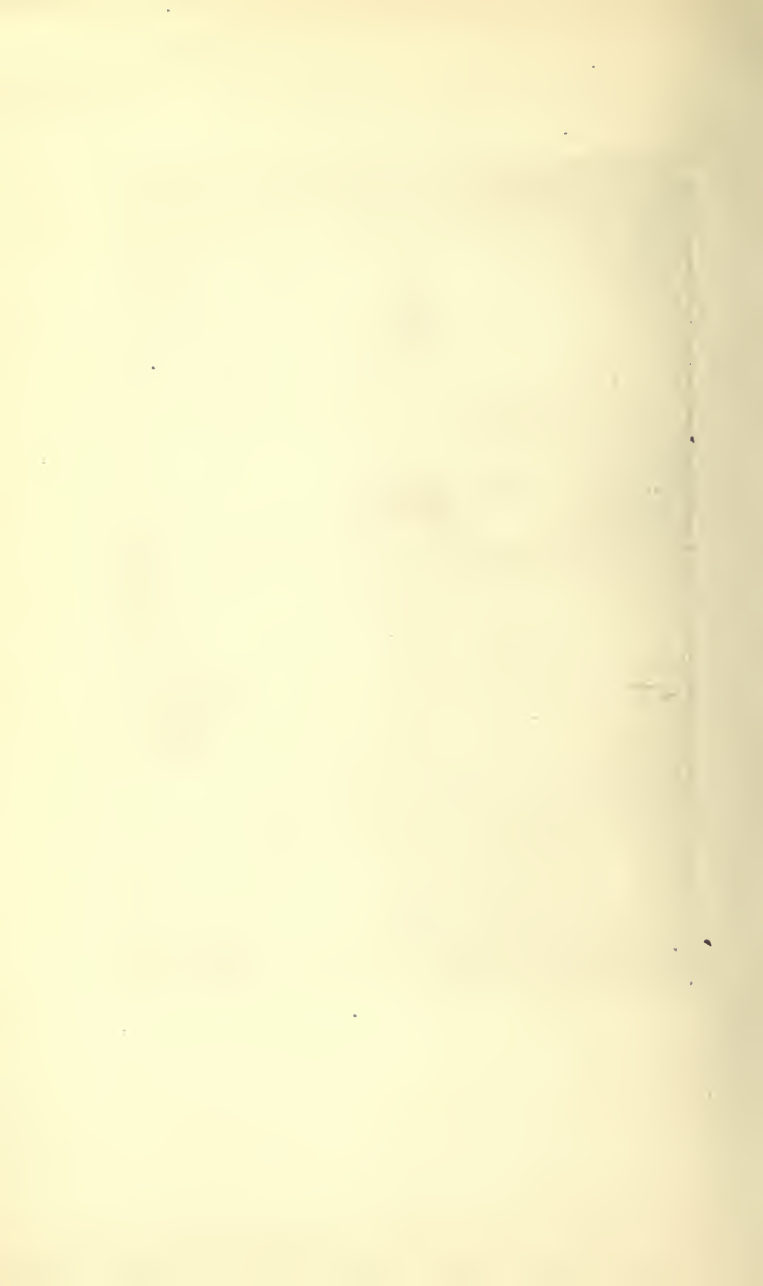
¹ The double cornucopiae is borrowed from the contemporary coins of Alexander Zebinas; it is even possible that some specimens of Hyrcanus's coins are re-struck on Seleucid bronze. The anchor is the well-known badge of the Seleucids.

² Some small coins having for type the candlestick with seven branches (Madden, *op. cit.*, p. 102, nos. 8-9) are attributed to the last Hasmonaean Antigonus, but the attribution is anything but certain.



PLATE II.

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On the more recent coins on the other hand, from Alexander Jannaeus onwards (105-76 B.C.), the legend is often bilingual, Hebrew on one side and Greek on the other. On the one the prince is called by his Jewish name, on the other by a Greek name arbitrarily chosen. Thus Alexander Jannaeus calls himself on one side *Jehonathan Hammelek* (Jonathan the king), on the other βασιλέως Ἀλεξάνδρου (Alexander the king).¹

Still more curiously the last prince of the dynasty, Antigonus (40-37 B.C.), styles himself high priest on the Hebrew side (*Mattathiah Hakkohen Haggadol, Hacheber Hajehudim*) and king on the Greek side (βασιλέως Ἀντιγόνου). This priest-king reminds us of Maître Jacques in Molière's *Avare*. His coins (Pl. III. 2, 3), which reveal to us his Hebrew name, otherwise unknown to historians, are the only ones of the series

¹ The rare coins of Queen Alexandra, widow and heiress of Alexander Jannaeus, were also probably bilingual, but the Hebrew legend has become illegible. It is known that this queen was called by her Hebrew name Salome (Derenbourg, *Histoire de la Palestine*, p. 102).

which bear regnal dates : these are indicated by the letter *shin* (the initial letter of *shenath*, year), followed by an *aleph* (the year 1) or a *beth* (the year 2).

We see that the legends on the Hasmonean coins amply confirm the statements of Josephus as to the history of this dynasty ; at first scrupulous servants of the theocracy, purely Jews and priests, the descendants of the Maccabees emancipated themselves little by little from the tutelage of the Pharisees, entitled themselves kings, and displayed those very Hellenizing tendencies against which their ancestors had been the first to revolt. The writing of these legends is no less interesting than their contents. These characters have long been known as the Samaritan alphabet, because it was believed that the Jews had borrowed them from their neighbours of Samaria, who still make use of them. To-day we know that in reality they represent the primitive Palestinian form of the Hebrew alphabet. They approach indeed, with singular closeness, to the writing of the most ancient

Hebrew inscriptions—the Stele of Mesha and the inscription of Siloam. This alphabet, consecrated by tradition, remained the only one in use on the purely Jewish coins, even after the square alphabet, coming from Babylon, was introduced into current use: between the coins of Simon or of John Hyrcanus (135 B.C.) and those of Barcochba (135 A.D.) there is no appreciable palaeographical difference.¹

It may be asserted that every Jewish coin inscribed in square Hebrew characters is a modern forgery.

¹ We must renounce the search for a chronological indication in the pointed or round form of the letter *shin*. There are plenty of coins of the time of the Revolts where the *shin* takes the former shape on one side, the latter on the other. On the other hand, the rounded *shin* already figures on the coins of John Hyrcanus, while those of Antigonus have a *shin* resembling a digamma upside down, which is not found anywhere else.



FIG. 1.

III

THE Hasmonaean dynasty ended, like the majority of Oriental dynasties, in bloodshed and imbecility; the last princes of this race were either fierce tyrants like Alexander Jannaeus, or half-idiot high priests like John Hyrcanus II. On two different occasions the civil wars of the Jews necessitated the intervention of the Roman army, which in 64 B.C. had conquered Syria, and superseded the Seleucidae in their capacity of suzerains of the Jews. In 63 B.C., Pompeius, having been chosen to act as arbitrator between the two brothers Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, pronounced in favour of Hyrcanus, and took Jerusalem by assault, its defenders being the partisans of the other pretender. In 37 B.C., C. Sosius, a lieutenant of Marcus Antonius, again conquered Jerusalem, where Antigonus Mattathias, the

son of Aristobulus, had established himself with the support of the Parthians. The last scion of the Maccabees was made prisoner, taken to Antioch, and after being flogged was beheaded.

Two curious Roman coins have preserved for us the memory of these events. The first is a silver denarius (Pl. III. 4) bearing the name of Aulus Plautius, who was curule aedile with Plancius in 54 B.C.; this Plautius, an ardent partisan of Pompeius, had probably been one of his lieutenants during his Syrian expedition. On the reverse of his denarius is seen a kneeling figure, with the branch of a suppliant in his hand, and holding a camel by the bridle; around is the legend, *Bacchius Judaeus*. This type is an exact copy of the coins of Scaurus, struck some years before, which commemorated the victory of this general (another of Pompeius's lieutenants) over Aretas, king of Nabathaea; the legend here was *Rex Aretas*. "Bacchius the Jew" may have been some insignificant Syrian prince, more or less Jewish, whose subjection had been the work of Plautius.

Written records make no mention of this person, but we know that at the time of Pompeius's expedition there existed in the Lebanon district several rulers of this kind, holding a position midway between that of brigand chief and of king. One of these, mentioned by Josephus,¹ was called *Dionysios*; is it not possible that Bacchius is simply the Latin translation of this Greek name? ²

The bronze coin of Sosius (Pl. III. 5) is yet more interesting, for it served as the prototype of the famous coins of Vespasian with the legend *Judaea capta*. The reverse represents a trophy erected between a Jewish prisoner in bonds (possibly meant for Antigonus) and a Jewish female captive, a personification of Judaea. Around is the name of the conqueror: *C. Sosius imp(erator)*. On the obverse of the coin is the portrait of Antonius, and the letters *Za*, the initials of

¹ Josephus, *Ant.* xiv. 3, 2. He was tyrant of Tripolis. His neighbour Silas was expressly designated as a Jew.

² The opinion that Bacchius the Jew is Aristobulus, priest of the (Jewish) Bacchus (*i.e.* Jehovah), is very unlikely.



PLATE III.

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the word *Zacynthus*, the island in which this bronze coin was struck.

In the place of the Hasmonaeans, who were extinct in the male line, the Romans put upon the throne of Judaea the Idumaeen Herod, whose father Antipater had already been Mayor of the Palace in the reign of Hyrcanus II. Herod reigned thirty-three years, and proved a despot, active, cruel and ostentatious. From the political point of view, he showed himself the very docile vassal of Rome. Like the majority of other vassal princes, he was only authorized to strike bronze coins. Although but little inclined to follow the traditions of the Pharisees, and probably believing but little himself, Herod respected the national sentiment in the choice of his monetary types; he represented only inanimate objects, some (Pl. IV. 1) borrowed from the Hasmonaeen bronze coins (the palm, crown, cornucopiae), while others were new (tripod, helmet, *acrostolion*), sometimes laying claim to a Macedonian origin (the Macedonian shield). The most remarkable pieces (Pl. III. 6) are

those which bear a regnal date expressed in the Egyptian fashion by the sign **ΛΓ** (the year three) and a monogram, which is a mark showing the value (the initial letters of the word *τρίχαλκον*). On all these coins, as on those of the other princes of the Idumaeen dynasty, the legend is purely Greek: βασιλέως Ἡρώδου, "King Herod" (we know that from the time of Herod onwards the functions of king and high priest were kept strictly separate). The exclusive employment of the Greek language proves how widely the knowledge of this tongue had spread among the Jews.

Towards the end of his life, Herod seems to have departed from his habitual display of consideration for the religious feelings or prejudices of his subjects. He planted a gold eagle on the pediment of the Temple of Jehovah, and a few days before his death he suppressed, not without bloodshed, a revolt which this heathen symbol had provoked. To this troubled period are attributed some small bronze coins, on the reverse of which is represented an eagle. (Fig. 1, p. 28.)

On the death of Herod, his dominions were divided between his sons, who had to content themselves with the more modest titles of *tetrarch* and *ethnarch*. Herod Philip reigned over the territories to the east and north-east (Batanaea, Trachonitis, and Hauran), on the borders of the desert; Herod Antipas had Galilee and Peraea; Judaea properly so called was assigned to the eldest son, Herod Archelaus. The first two princes reigned for long periods; their coins are of small interest, and do not, properly speaking, belong to Jewish numismatics. All have regnal dates or Greek legends: "Herod (or Philip), tetrarch," on one side, the name of the reigning emperor on the other.¹ As to types, the bronze coins of Antipas (Pl. IV. 2) have the palm and the wreath. Those of Philip (Pl. IV. 3), which were struck in a country where the Jewish population was in a minority, broke away from the observance of the command in the Decalogue concerning the representation of animate objects: they ex-

¹ On some coins of Antipas (Pl. IV. 2) the name of the emperor is replaced by that of the capital (Tiberias).

hibit on one side the head of the emperor, and on the other a tetrastyle temple, which was doubtless the temple of Augustus, built by Herod the Great in the city of Caesarea-Paneas, where Philip resided.

To return to Jerusalem. Herod Archelaus, the son of Herod the Great, there struck coins of bronze, resembling those of his father, with the Greek legend, "Herod Ethnarch," and bearing types as numerous as they are unimportant¹ (Pl. IV. 4). At the end of ten years this brutal tyrant had made himself so unpopular that the Jewish notables demanded and obtained his deposition; Archelaus was exiled to Vienne in Gaul, and Judaea was reduced to a province (6 A.D.), or rather to a dependency of the province of Syria. Nevertheless, the Idumaeen dynasty was still to furnish Judaea with a sovereign. Thirty years after the deposition of Archelaus, Agrippa, one of Herod's grandsons, who had been brought up in Rome and had succeeded in ingratiating himself with Caligula, received

¹ Bunch of grapes, helmet, caduceus, anchor, prow, cornucopiae, wreath, and galley.



PLATE IV.

To face page 34.

from the latter the tetrarchies of Antipas and Philip, which had become vacant by the death or the exile of their rulers (37-40 A.D.). After the death of Caligula and the elevation of Claudius to the supreme power, Agrippa, who had contributed to this result, received in addition Judaea itself. He then united under his sceptre all the possessions of his grandfather, and was authorized to assume the title of king. This hoary libertine was a king after the heart of the Pharisees. His Jewish coins, properly so called, present (Pl. IV. 5, 6) on the obverse the singular type of an umbrella, which has also been taken for a tabernacle ; on the reverse, three ears of corn, the emblem of prosperity. His name he gives in Greek as King Agrippa, and marks the coins with a regnal date, always the year 6.

Besides these coins, which were intended for circulation in a Jewish country, Agrippa struck some much less orthodox pieces, on which figured some quite pagan types (Victory, Fortune, etc.), the portrait of the reigning emperor, and sometimes even that of

Agrippa himself and his son on horseback. On some, as on his inscriptions on stone, he takes the ostentatious title of "The great King Agrippa, the friend of Caesar" (βασιλεὺς μέγας Ἀγρίππας φιλόκαισαρ). These coins were doubtless intended to circulate only in Agrippa's old tetrarchies, or in the towns on the sea-coast, where there was a very mixed population; the majority, indeed, bear the name of a new city, Caesarea or Tiberias.

Finally, a third type is represented by a very singular issue, which appears to be less a coin properly so called than a medal commemorating the accession of Agrippa and his alliance with the Romans, which had most likely been officially inscribed on a bronze tablet in Rome, as was the custom. It displays on one side, "King Agrippa, the friend of Cæsar"; on the other, two hands clasped surrounded by a wreath—the emblem of a treaty of alliance—and a long inscription: "Friendship and alliance of King Agrippa with the Senate and the People of Rome." Agrippa I. only reigned four years in Judæa. On his death (44 A.D.) his kingdom

was for a second time reduced to the status of Roman provincial territory. Judaea properly so called never again changed its political condition. As to the other territories—the tetrarchies of Antipas and of Philip—they were once more constituted a principality in the interest of Agrippa's son, Agrippa II. (the brother of the famous Berenice), whose life was prolonged till at least 95 A.D.¹ But although Agrippa II. was an Israelite and retained some of his rights over Jerusalem, notably that of living in the palace of the Herods, and of nominating the high priest, his coinage, like his policy, had nothing national about it, and it is only by straining the sense of the words that his coins can be reckoned among Jewish coins.²

¹ Indeed Photius (cod. 33) makes him live till 100 A.D., but this information has often been suspected, and it seems difficult to admit that Josephus's *Vita*, where Agrippa is mentioned as dead (c. 65), was written so late. The last dated coins are of the year 35 = 95 A.D.

² The coins of Agrippa II. are either *autonomous* or *imperial*, but in neither case do they conform to the Jewish law. The former have on the obverse the head of Agrippa, a hand holding ears of corn, or a head

It is just the same in the case of the contemporary coins of the " Kingdom " of Chalcis in Lebanon, which was ruled over by a collateral branch of the family of the Herods.¹

(Tyche) with a turreted crown ; the latter (Pl. IV. 7) bear the head of the reigning emperor, with his titles (often very incorrectly expressed) in Greek or Latin. On the reverse the types are various, but without interest (Fortune, Victory, galley, wreath, palm, altar, cornucopiae and caduceus, anchor, circle). There exist, besides, the municipal coins of Caesarea Philippi (now called Neronias) and of Tiberias, which bear the name of Agrippa : the coins of this prince are all dated, mostly by an era beginning 61 A.D., which may be the local era of Neronias. Some coins mention another era five years older.

¹ Herod I., brother of Agrippa I. (41-48 A.D.) ; his son Aristobulus and Queen Salome (Babelon, *Revue numismatique*, 1883, p. 145 ; Imhoof, *Porträtköpfe*, vi. 21, 22).

IV

WE have seen that on two different occasions—after the deposition of Archelaus, and again on the death of Agrippa I.—Judaea was reduced to the position of a provincial territory by the Romans. This territory, which had Caesarea for its capital, was governed by an official of somewhat inferior rank, the procurator, who, from the military point of view, was subordinate to the governor of Syria. The gold and silver coins of Rome gradually supplanted at this time the Greek money of preceding periods. We still (until about 56 A.D.) have to deal with the Tyrian staters—which were especially appropriated to the payment of religious taxes—but the coins most current in Syria were the Graeco-Roman tetradrachms of Antioch and the Roman denarius, which had been made legally equivalent to the Attic drachm. It

was a coin of this kind (Pl. V. 1) which the Pharisees and the Herodians, *i. e.* the partisans of the theocratic republic on the one hand, and of the Idumæan dynasty on the other, showed to Christ when they asked Him whether it were lawful to pay tribute. "Whose is this image and superscription?" He asked them. They replied, "Caesar's." "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's."¹

Besides these silver denarii, Judæa also possessed a bronze coinage of lower denomination, issued by the procurators in imitation of the Hasmonæan and Idumæan princes. These coins were not struck under the authority of the Senate, like the ordinary Roman brass; Judæa being considered as an imperial district, they bear the name of the reigning emperor in Greek. There was also sometimes associated with this, or substituted for it, the name of the emperor's mother, or of his son; they also bear a

¹ St. Matt. xxii. 15 ff.

regnal date. These coins¹ circulated only in Judaea, and were probably struck by Jewish workmen; this is doubtless the reason why the procurators represented on them only inanimate objects (Pl. V. 3), in conformity with the Mosaic law (ear of corn, palm-tree or branch, cornucopiae, *diota*, covered vase, wreath, etc.). We reproduce here (Pl. V. 2) a coin of the procurator Pontius Pilate, struck in the year of the Crucifixion (the eighteenth year of Tiberius, 35 A.D.). The types are the laurel-wreath and the *lituus* or augur's wand.

If the procurators had shown as much tolerance in the rest of their administration as in their coinage, Judaea would easily have resigned herself to the loss of her independence. But numerous tactless blunders, sometimes even real acts of persecution, wounded the religious sentiment of the people; the avarice or the injustice of certain governors completed the exasperation of the Jews, who

¹ They may be termed *quadrantes*, a name twice used in the New Testament. Their legal value was the fourth of an *as*.

were already greatly excited by party spirit and the ebullition of feeling due to Messianic expectations. The tyranny of the governors increased in the same proportion as the fanaticism of their subjects. But at last a day came when the cup was full to overflowing, and the revolt of despair broke out : it was accompanied by deplorable excesses, but Tacitus himself recognized that the responsibility for the first wrongs lay with the Romans. *Duravit patientia Judaeis usque ad Gessium Florum. . .*¹

The revolution really triumphed in *Eloul* (September) 66 A.D., the date on which the Roman garrison of the castle in Jerusalem capitulated. It ended on *Eloul* (September) 8th, 70 A.D., the date on which the last quarters of the city were retaken by the soldiers of Titus.² It lasted, therefore, almost exactly four Jewish years. In this interval the Jews were masters of the whole of Palestine (Judaea, Samaria, and Galilee)

¹ Tacitus, *Hist.* v. 10.

² *Ibid.* vi. 8, 5. The Temple is known to have been burnt on *Ab* (August) 10th, and not 9th (*Ibid.* vi. 4, 5).



PLATE V.

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until the end of 67 A.D., of a part of Judaea until the middle of 69, of Jerusalem alone and some of the lesser strongholds during the last year.

The numismatic records of the great Jewish rebellion are singularly few and unimportant in number. They consist chiefly of small bronze coins, whose types are a vine- (or fig-) leaf and a two-handled vase, with or without a lid (Pl. V. 4). The legend reads : obverse, *Cheruth Zion* (liberty of Zion) ; reverse, *Shenath Shetaim* (year 2) or *Shalosh* (3). So we have here a new monetary era, starting, as it seems, from September 66 A.D., for in those days the civil year undoubtedly began in autumn.

In the fourth year other bronze coins were struck, some of them of a larger module. Their types are (Pl. V. 5, 6), on one side the citron (*ethrog*) between the two bundles of twigs (*lulab*) which the Jews carried in the Feast of Tabernacles ; on the other side sometimes a cup, sometimes a palm-tree between two baskets. The legend is uniformly *Ligulath Zion* (deliverance of Zion), the date

Shenath arba (year 4). Moreover, the larger coins bear a mark of value *chatzi* (half); the middle-sized *rebfa* (quarter). What the unit was, of which these are the fractions, is not clear. I am inclined to think that it was the shekel. At any rate, we have here not an ordinary divisional coinage, but a sort of obsidional money, a money of necessity, forcibly introduced into currency with a nominal value far above its intrinsic worth; in fact, the equivalent of modern paper money offered by bankrupt states. The circumstances will explain this exceptional coinage; "year 4" corresponds to Sept. 69—Sept. 70 A.D., the period when the Jewish rebellion was restricted to Jerusalem, then closely besieged by the Romans, and when most likely all the reserve of silver and gold, formerly hoarded in the treasury of the Temple, had been exhausted by the necessities of war. The bronze coinage formed a temporary substitute for the normal currency.



FIG. 2.

V.

AFTER lasting for four years the Jewish revolt was quenched in streams of blood. Not only was the independence of Israel no longer in question, but Palestine had now become a special province occupied by a Roman legion (the Tenth *Fretensis*, of which some coins still remain); the holy city and the Temple, destroyed by fire, lay in ruins. The Romans celebrated their victory, so dearly bought, by the erection of the Arch of Titus, and by numerous coins of every kind of metal and of every module, the types of which bear reference to the suppression of the Jewish revolt. These coins, struck in the name of the emperors Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian, and bearing their effigies, belong to a well-known class, of which the money of Sosius, mentioned above, which commemorated the defeat of the last

of the Maccabees, is one of the earliest examples. The most ordinary type represents a captive—Judaea—seated or standing at the foot of a palm-tree or a trophy. On the other side of this central *motif* is represented sometimes, as on the coins of Sosius, a Jewish prisoner, sometimes (Pl. VI. 1) the victorious emperor in military attire. In another group of coins the type is a Victory inscribing the name of the emperor on a shield, which she supports against a palm-tree (Pl. VI. 3). The legend, *Judaea devicta* (Pl. VI. 2), on the gold and silver coins (sometimes in Greek: ΙΟΥΔΑΙΑΣ ΕΑΛΩΚΤΙΑΣ)—*Judaea capta* on the bronze—leaves no doubt as to the interpretation of these sufficiently transparent symbols.

In the interval of sixty years which separates the two revolts, we find, further, two Roman coins, which are closely bound up with Jewish history. One is the large bronze coin (Pl. VII. 1) of Nerva (96–98), the reverse of which gives a representation of a palm-tree, with the legend, *Fisci Judaici calumnia sublata* (the suppression of the



PLATE VI.

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prosecutions in connection with the Jewish treasury). The *fiscus Judaicus* was simply the poll-tax of the half-shekel (or the didrachm) formerly paid by all the faithful to the Temple at Jerusalem, to which the Romans, now that the Temple no longer existed, laid claim, to their own profit. The Jews naturally abhorred this impious tax, the proceeds of which were cast into the treasury of Jupiter Capitolinus at Rome; hence they strove to conceal their Israelite origin, in order to be exempt from payment. These dissimulations brought in their train accusations, vexatious prosecutions, and visits which were something more than domiciliary. The bronze coin of Nerva, which belongs to a period of comparative pacification, commemorates the suppression of these abuses (*calumnia*), though not of the tax itself.

The bronze coin of Hadrian (Pl. VII. 2), struck in his third consulate (130 A.D.), is no less curious. It is a souvenir of a journey which this nomad emperor made in Judaea, and of the official cordiality with which he was

received. On it we see Judaea, followed by her children, advancing towards Hadrian with a patera in her hand to offer a libation on the altar from which the flame already rises; behind her walks a bull, the victim appointed for the sacrifice. Legend, *Adventui Aug. Iudaeae*.

These imperial visits, this enthusiasm procured to order, marked the calm that preceded the storm. Already, at the end of Trajan's reign, a bloody insurrection had broken out among the Jewish colonies of Mesopotamia, Cyprus, Egypt, and the Cyrenaïca. As a consequence of Hadrian's tour and of acts of provocation, the details of which are but little known, the Jews in Palestine took up arms in their turn (133 A.D.). The revolt was protracted and desperate. It had at its head an adventurer named in Jewish documents Bar Koziba, in Christian documents *Bar Cochbà*, "the son of the star," doubtless an allusion to the prophecy of Balaam: "There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of



PLATE VII.

To face page 43.



Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth." Barcochba passed himself off, indeed, as the Messiah, and he was recognized as such by the learned doctor Akiba. This man and another rabbi, Eleazar of Modein, the uncle of Barcochba, whom his nephew ended by suspecting of treason and kicked to death, were the only notable doctors who sided with the insurgents; the rest of the rabbis stood aside. The rebels, who reached the number of 200,000, after having occupied several strongholds and probably Jerusalem itself, were hunted from one shelter to another, and were finally exterminated in the fortress of Bethar, their last refuge (135 A.D.).

Like their predecessors, the insurgents of 66 A.D., the rebels under Hadrian asserted the independence of Judaea by striking coins; but their insurrection was of a very different character from the first, and this difference finds expression in the types and legends of the coins.

The insurgents of 66 were enthusiastic Pharisees (zealots), jealous democrats, undisciplined, and levelling all distinctions;

hence their coins bore no proper name. *Tres duces, tot exercitus*, said Tacitus ; the partisans of Eleazar, the son of Simon, would have refused to use the coins of Simon Bargioras, while those of Bargioras would have had none of John of Giscala's. The sacred name of Jerusalem brought every one into agreement. On the other hand, Barcochba seems to have been, at least in the last years, absolute dictator ; he clearly aimed at kingship, and as his uncle, Eleazar, was a native of Modein, the country of the Maccabees, it is by no means impossible that Barcochba was connected by birth with the royal family of the Hasmonaeans.¹ Hence he caused his own name to appear on the great majority of his coins ; but this name is not the patronymic or punning name given him by Christian or Talmudic texts, but the name of *Simon*, our knowledge of which comes from the coins alone. We need not

¹ In the unintelligible text of Syncellus (p. 660, 18 : Χοχέβας τις ὁ μονογενὴς (only son ?) ἡγεῖτο), is it possible that the word Ἀσάμωνογενὴς, *descendant of the Hasmonaeans*, is concealed ?

be greatly astonished that it has not been handed down by the written documents, for we know from other examples that persons who bore very common names were habitually designated by their patronymics in order to avoid confusion. So in the first insurrection Simon Bargioras is called by Dion Cassius simply Bargioras, and Tacitus even gives him in error the *praenomen* of John.¹

In the time of Barcochba the Temple and its treasure existed no longer; so there were no gold or silver ingots to be got from which the insurgents could have manufactured the blanks of their coins. On the other hand, the autonomous money of Tyre, formerly accepted even for sacred purposes, had ceased to be struck since about 56 A.D. and was becoming scarce. No other silver was therefore to be had than the Graeco-Roman tetradrachms issued by the imperial mint of Antioch, and perhaps that of Tyre, for the use of the Greek-speaking Eastern provinces, and the Roman denarii. These were the coins used

¹ Tacit., *Hist.* v. 12; Dion, xvi. 7.

by the insurgents, but in their fanatic hatred of a foreign yoke and of the Greek civilization, they re-struck them with dies orthodox in their design, in order to obliterate the abhorred types and inscriptions of their masters. All the smaller silver coins of Barcochba are Roman denarii (*cph.* Pl. VIII. 1) or Graeco-Roman drachms of Caesarea in Cappadocia re-struck with Jewish types, and the re-striking was sometimes so hasty that the old legend, and sometimes the old head, are still visible at the edge of the blank. There are even coins on which it has been possible to decipher the names of the Roman emperors posterior to the first revolt (from Galba to Hadrian), and this has allowed us to attribute with certainty to Barcochba the denarii with the name of Simon. It follows that the coins on which the re-striking is not apparent, as they have exactly the weight, the types, and the legends of the others, belong to the same period and are themselves only denarii, re-struck, but with greater care.¹

¹ See Hamburger, *Die Münzprägungen während des letzten Aufstandes der Israeliten gegen Rom*, 1892.

These general observations make it possible for me to be very brief in the enumeration of the monetary types of Barcochba. His coinage comprises pieces of silver and of bronze. The former are, first of all, the re-struck Roman denarii which we have just been discussing (Pl. VIII. 2-5). The types are, on the obverse, the crown (Pl. VIII. 4) or the bunch of grapes (Pl. VIII. 3, 5); on the reverse, a vase and a palm-branch (Pl. VIII. 4), a palm-branch alone (Pl. VIII. 2), a lyre (Pl. VIII. 5), or two trumpets (Pl. VIII. 3, sacred instruments, which are thus represented on the Arch of Titus). The legend on the obverse is invariably *Simon* (the name sometimes spelt in a curious fashion); on the reverse, *Sh(enath) beth lecher(uth) Israel*, "year 2 of the liberty of Israel," or simply *Lecheruth Yerushalem*, "liberty of Jerusalem"—a new era of liberty, the third we have met with in Jewish numismatics. The coins with this latter inscription, which do not differ in any way from the others, appear to have been struck in Jerusalem, and thus confirm the indication, furnished by several texts, that the

insurgents were for some time masters of the ruins of this city.

Parallel to these re-struck denarii exists a series of "shekels," or rather debased Attic tetradrachms (Pl. VIII. 6), the bulk, if not the whole, of which have been re-struck on imperial tetradrachms of Antioch, mostly of the reign of Trajan. Their obverse type is a portico with four columns, *i.e.* a conventional representation of the Temple at Jerusalem, which the insurgents proposed to rebuild. Above the Temple is usually an adjunct symbol, a star—perhaps an allusion to the name Barcochba, "son of the star"—which sometimes appears degraded as a cross. The type of the reverse—*ethrog* and *lulab*, or *lulab* alone—recalls the analogous types of the first rebellion. The tetradrachms of the first year (*shenath achath ligullath Israel*, "year 1 of the deliverance of Israel") bear on the obverse the name of *Jerusalem*; those of the second year (*sh(enath) beth lecher(uth) Israel*, "year 2 of the liberty of Israel") bear sometimes the name of *Jerusalem*, sometimes the name of *Simon*; the



PLATE VIII.

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undated coins (*lecheruth Yerushalem*, "liberty of Jeusalem") bear only this latter name.

As the reader will observe, there exist no *silver* coins of the first year of the rebellion—either denarii or tetradrachms—with the name of Simon. Who was, then, the head of the new commonwealth during that year? The reply to this question has been supplied by the discovery of a curious coin, the only known specimen of which (Fig. 2, p. 45) belongs to the cabinet of the Marquis de Vogüé in Paris. It is a re-struck denarius, having as types on one side a vase and palm, on the other a bunch of grapes. The legend runs on the obverse, *Eleazar hakkohen* (Eleazar the priest); on the reverse, *Shenath achath ligullath Israël*, "year 1 of the deliverance of Israel." That this Eleazar (whose bronze coins will be mentioned presently) is a contemporary of Simon Bar-cochba appears from several "hybrid" specimens of re-struck denarii, which exhibit simultaneously on one side the die (obverse or reverse) of Eleazar, on the other the die of Simon. But the historical identification of the "priest Eleazar" remains

quite uncertain. Some believe him to be identical with the rabbi Eleazar (or rather Elieser) of Modein, uncle and victim of Barcochba, who, however, is not reported to have been a priest; others have proposed Eleazar ben Azaria, who, in fact, was of priestly descent, or Eleazar ben Harsom.

In addition to the silver coinage, the insurgents under Hadrian struck, or rather re-struck, a great many bronze coins of various sizes. Some are dated from the first year of the deliverance of Israel (*shenath achath ligullath Israël*) or from the second (*sh. beth lecheruth Israël*); others bear simply the lettering, *lecheruth Yerushalem*, "liberty of Jerusalem." Among the bronze coins of year 1, a few are struck in the name of the priest Eleazar (*Eleazar hakkohen*); their types are a palm-tree and a bunch of grapes (Pl. IX. 1). Other coins of the same year, some of which are of very large size, bear the legend *Simon Nasi Israël*, "Simon prince of Israel" (types: wreath and two-handled vase (Pl. IX. 2), palm-tree and vine-leaf; wreath, palm-branch and lyre). Although the title *nasi* was used in later years



PLATE IX.

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to designate the president of the rabbinic Sanhedrin, it seems probable that it is employed here in a profane sense, and that "Simon Nasi" is no other than Simon Bar-cochba. In the year 2 the name of Eleazar disappears; but there are a few coins of Simon, with the simple legend *Simon* and the same types as in year 1 (Pl. IX. 3); on some rare specimens (type: palm-tree and cluster of grapes) the legend, instead of Simon, reads *Yerushalem*. The bronze coins without a date exhibit the same varieties as those of the year 2.

I am unwilling to leave the coins of the second Jewish revolt without mentioning the allusion made to the subject in a well-known passage of the Talmud. "The *Ma'aser Sheni*" (the second tithe), say the rabbis, "cannot be paid in a coinage which is not current, like the coins of Koziba or of Jerusalem, or that of the former kings.¹"

¹ Tosefta, *Ma'aser Sheni*, I. 5. The same passage is reproduced with alterations in the Talmud of Jerusalem (*Ma'aser Sheni*, I. 2) and in that of Babylon (*Baba Kamma*, 97 b). The coins of the revolts are here classed together

The coins of Koziba are the tetradrachms and denarii of Simon Barcochba, whom the rabbis, his enemies, often call *Ben Koziba*, "the son of the lie." The coins of Jerusalem are the tetradrachms of the second revolt, with the legend "Jerusalem." The "coins of the former kings" are the shekels and half-shekels of Simon the Hasmonaeon, perhaps also the tetradrachms of the Seleucidae and the Ptolemies, which were no longer current at the time when the *halakha* was drawn up.

under the common heading, "Money of the time of danger," and the Rabbi Ime decides that they ought to be cast into the sea.

VI

WITH the coins of Barcochba we have finished our excursion across the domain of Jewish numismatics. While the first revolt had as its consequence the destruction of the Temple, the second brought in its train the almost complete extermination of the Jewish population of Palestine. Numbers of heathen colonists took the place of the old inhabitants, and on the site of Jerusalem there arose a Roman town called Aelia Capitolina, after the Emperor Aelius Hadrian and Jupiter Capitolinus, whose temple replaced that of Jehovah. This town, which the Jews were forbidden to enter, held the rank of a colony, and has left a long series of bronze coins, which extends from Hadrian to Valerian (136-260 A.D.). The two most interesting types are reproduced here. One represents the foundation of the city—a colonist draw-

ing the furrow to mark the limits of the future enclosure (Pl. X. 1). The other shows the three divinities—Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva—who were worshipped in the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus at Rome and at Aelia (Pl. X. 2).

Jerusalem is not the only city in Palestine in which the pagan worship took possession of places formerly devoted to the worship of the true God. The famous temple of the Samaritans on Mount Gerizim, which had already once before been transformed into a temple of Zeus Xenios, and then was restored to monotheistic worship, had been disestablished a second time in favour of Jupiter. This temple is represented on a very picturesque coin of Neapolis (the new capital of Samaria, the present Nablous) struck under the Emperor Antoninus Pius (Pl. X. 3).

Nevertheless, at the time when Judaism was being thus humiliated, hunted and exterminated in its native country, it found a source of strength even in its defeat, expanded more and more in the countries of



PLATE X.

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PLATE XI.

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the dispersion, and gained dominion over the souls of many. Not only did Jewish monotheism and Jewish morality gain proselytes up to the very steps of the throne, but the heathen legends began to reconcile themselves with Jewish traditions, and to merge themselves into them. We have a very remarkable example of this gradual fusion on a coin of Apamea in Phrygia, which dates from the reign of the Emperor Septimius Severus, and was repeated several times under the following reigns (Pl. XI.). On the reverse of this coin are seen two figures, a man and woman, seated in a chest, floating on the water; on the open lid is perched a bird. On the left is another scene, which continues the first in order of time; the two people have left the chest, and the bird is bringing them an olive branch. In this description will be recognized without difficulty a well-known episode in the history of the Deluge. Traditions analogous to those of the Bible existed among the heathen: the Phrygians in particular had their myth about the Deluge, which in the end became localized

at Apamea Cibotus, Apamea "the Chest." As this town, from the time of Cicero¹ onwards, contained a large Jewish population, a fusion of the two legends must have been effected at an early period. We find a proof of this elsewhere in a passage in the Sibylline Books, where the writer recounts how the ark of Noah came to a standstill at the source of the river Marsyas, *i. e.* near Apamea Cibotus.² Now imagine a Judaizing, or, say, well-read magistrate of Apamea, at the end of the second century—the "agonothetes," or aedile, Artemas—charged with the invention of a new type for the coins of this town. It will be understood how he would hasten to make choice of one which had the singular merit of reconciling in the happiest

¹ See Cicero, *pro Flacco*, 28. The quantity of gold (destined for the Temple at Jerusalem) confiscated by Flaccus from the Jews at Apamea was valued at a hundred pounds, an amount which, given the relative value of gold and of silver, corresponds to about 330 kilogrammes of silver, or 37,500 half-shekels, a quantity so considerable that it must represent the contribution of several years or some extraordinary gifts.

² *Libri Sibyllini*, i. 273.

manner the Hebrew traditions with those of the locality ; moreover, to remove any shadow of doubt, it was Noah's name (ΝΩΕ) which he had engraved in full on the ark ; the deluge of Apamea and the deluge of Noah are truly, for him, one and the same.

Let us conclude with this example, both piquant and consoling, of a religious syncretism, which was at that time visible in some degree throughout the heathen world to the profit of Judaism and its first-born, Christianity. It is the time when the unknown author of the Treatise on the Sublime does not fear to borrow an example of "sublime" literature from the Book of Genesis ; it is the time when the Emperor Severus Alexander placed in his oratory a bust of Orpheus between busts of Abraham and of Christ. Two centuries later, and a poet, a pagan fanatic, cried with an indignation which bears witness to his sincerity :¹

Atque utinam nunquam Judaea subacta fuisset
Pompeii bellis imperioque Titi !
Latius excisae pestis contagia serpunt
Victoresque suos natio victa premit.

¹ Rutilius Namatianus, *Itinera*, v. 385.



FIG. 3.

APPENDIX

FALSE SHEKELS.¹

EVERY numismatist is familiar with the pieces, generally roughly cast in more or less poor silver, which are passed off as genuine Jewish shekels (Fig. 3). The inscriptions are the same as those which we find on the genuine coins, except that they are in modern Hebrew letters, and that no date is given. The types approximate to those of the true coin ; but instead of the lily with three flowers we have a branch with many leaves ; and the chalice is replaced by an object apparently meant, to judge by the fumes

¹ This appendix is extracted, with the permission of Messrs. Bemrose and Sons, from an article in the *Reliquary and Illustrated Archæologist* for October 1902.

arising from it, for a pot full of incense. No one who has seen the genuine struck shekel could for a moment be deceived by this cast piece. Nevertheless, so few people take the trouble to test the truth of what is told them about Biblical antiquities, that tradesmen find it worth their while to offer for sale facsimiles of these impostures. Before me is an atrociously badly cast facsimile which is sold by one of the largest firms of general dealers in London, together with the following printed description :—

CAST-IRON MODEL OF JEWISH SHEKEL.

This is a facsimile of a genuine Shekel (called in the Bible “a piece of silver”), coined by Simon Maccabaeus, who was King of the Jews, 172–142 B.C.

It was issued in the year 170 B.C. It is, therefore, now 2,068 years old.

For thirty “pieces of silver” Judas betrayed our Lord. The Hebrew inscriptions on the obverse and reverse mean “Shekel of Israel” and “Liberator of Jerusalem,” and the designs represent the pot of manna and Aaron’s rod that budded.

Quite apart from the initial error of supposing the original of this facsimile to be a genuine Jewish shekel, this short paragraph

is well worth study for the other misrepresentations compressed into it. The date of Simon's election to the leadership of the Jews is generally supposed to be 143-142 B.C. Unless, therefore, the worthy person who compiled the paper has other information, I am inclined to think that he has been misled by some comparative table of eras, in which the Seleucid year 170 corresponds to the year 143-142 B.C. It would be interesting to know how he ascertains the exact year in which the coin was issued, since it bears no regnal date. The translation, "Liberator of Jerusalem," is also new, and may have been suggested by the legend, "Deliverance of Zion," found on some other Jewish coins. At the end of all this it would have been surprising indeed to miss the identification of the types as the pot of manna and Aaron's rod that budded.¹ The implication that the "thirty pieces of silver" were of this kind was also inevitable; but the history of this matter would require a chapter to itself.

¹ This is the traditional but unfounded explanation of the types of the true shekel.

M. A. Levy, in his *Jüdische Münzen* (1862), p. 163, says that the commonest of the forgeries of the Jewish shekel is a piece exactly corresponding to the one we have described. He mentions other forgeries,¹ but we may for the present confine ourselves to this, the most important—that is, the one which has made most victims. How far can we trace it back? We find it in Erasmus Froelich's *Annales Regum et Rerum Syriae* (Vienna, 1754) illustrated on Pl. XIX. (No. v.) among the “modern Hebrew coins,” which he gives as a warning to collectors. He says (*Prolegomena*, p. 92) that he has seen many specimens, varying in metal, weight, etc., but all manifestly false and modern. He supposes that they are due to an unsuccessful attempt to imitate the true shekels. In J. Leusden's *Philologus Hebraeo-mixtus* (4th ed., 1739, p. 207) it is also illustrated, this time as a genuine shekel; the types are explained as an incense-cup and Aaron's rod;

¹ The section of Levy's work relating to forgeries of Jewish coins is translated at length by Madden, *Coins of the Jews* (1881), pp. 314 f.

and the branch is represented as if it were growing up out of a mound.

The work of Caspar Waser, *de antiquis numis Hebræorum*, etc., Zürich, 1605, was known to Leusden. It is surprising, therefore, that the genuine shekel, which is moderately well represented by Waser (pp. 59 f.), should be ignored by the later author. Waser does not represent the false shekel with the censer, but it is worth while to glance at his method of dealing with Hebrew coins. On p. 77 and elsewhere he illustrates what (reading hastily) one would take to be a half-shekel of the second year, a one-third-shekel of the third year (Fig. 5), and a quarter-shekel of the fourth year. The peculiarity about these illustrations is that while the types and legends are as well represented as in the case of the whole shekel, the letter *sh* (initial of *shenath*, year) is omitted before the numeral. Now, the only genuine shekels and half-shekels on which this initial is absent are those of the first year. Waser lets the cat out of the bag when he comes to the one-third-shekel (p. 78). Of the existence of

this as a coin we have no evidence ; but Waser says : “ It is probable that the types and symbols of this coin were the same as those of the whole shekel, so I figure it here with the same types, but with this different inscription on the reverse : *shelishith hasshekel Israel*, ‘third of the shekel of Israel.’ ” He does not commit himself to any statement that the coin exists ; but “ it pleases him ” to represent it—“ *quare libet etiam eisdem (notis et symbolis) eum figuratum hic exhibere.* ” In the same spirit he has invented and figured the half-shekel and quarter-shekel ; for, although half-shekels exist, there is no doubt, from his mistake in the representation of the date, that he had never seen a half-shekel.¹ Indeed, he admits (p. 71) that all the many shekels he had ever seen had the letter *aleph* over the cup, *i.e.* were of the first year ; and it is a curious fact that by far

¹ The nature of Waser’s method was recognized by J. Morin (*Exercitationes*, p. 207). “Waser’s parts of the shekel seem not to be genuine, but invented to represent the fractions of which mention is made in the sacred Scriptures.”

the greater number of the illustrations in works of this time represent the shekel of this year. It seems that Waser, like Arias Montanus before him, regarded the *aleph* as the indication of the unit (one shekel), and therefore systematically marked his half-shekel with a *beth*, his third with a *gimel*, and his quarter with a *daleth*.¹

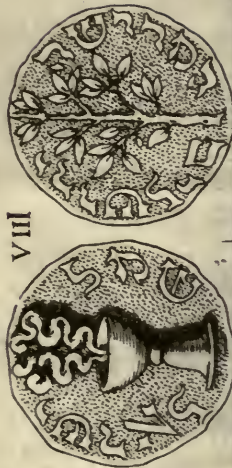
To return to the track of the false shekel. Villalpandus,² a year before Waser, published a plate representing a number of Jewish coins, including shekels of which we have no reason to doubt the authenticity, and also one of the censer-pieces (Pl. XII.). He insists that all these pieces, without exception, are *struck*: "which is so certain and clear upon examination, that should any one attempt to deny it, he would prove beyond all dispute that he was so lacking in knowledge of coins as to be unable to distinguish or separate

¹ J. B. Villalpandus, *Apparatus Urbis ac Templi Hierosolymitani*, Tom. iii., parts 1 and 2 (Rome, 1604), p. 390, recognized the inadequacy of Montanus's explanations, but proposed a worse one himself.

² *Op. cit.*, plate facing p. 378 ; see also p. 390.

ISRAEL SICLVS: SANCTA IERVSALEM

VIII



Siclus argenteus apud me

PLATE XII.

To face page 70.

struck coins from such as are cast or made by any other means." In the face of this fearful threat, I hesitate to assert that Villalpandus was mistaken in regard to the censer-piece; but his experience, so far as I can discover, is unique. He admits that some doubt has been thrown on the piece; but while he allows that it is somewhat later than the others which he illustrates, bearing letters of an older form, he still maintains that it is ancient.

Farther back than this I have failed to trace illustrations of this mysterious piece; but there is little doubt that something of the kind must have existed in the middle of the sixteenth century. Writing on March 21, 1552, to George III., Prince of Anhalt, Melanchthon says¹:—

"I now send you a silver shekel of the true weight of the shekel, to wit, a tetradrachm, with the inscription as it is depicted in the book of Postellus. I also add some verses, interpreting the rod of Aaron and the pot of incense . . .

¹ Bretschneider, *Corpus Reformatorum*, vol. vii. p. 964; cp. vol. x. p. 607.

DE VETERI NOMISMATE GENTIS
IUDAICAE.

Iusta sacerdotum demonstrat munera *Siclus*
Cuius in *Ebraeis* urbibus usus erat.
Ut sint doctrinae custodes, virga *Aharonis*,
Utque regant mores cum pietate, monet.
Significantque preces calicis fragrantia thura,
Praecipuum munus sunt pia vota Deo, etc.”

The verses are quoted by Waser to show that Melanchthon considered the chalice on the shekel (the true shekel, as he thinks) to be not the pot of manna, but a censer.



FIG. 4.

Waser is justified in thinking this, since in the book of Postellus,¹ to which we have referred above, the piece is undoubtedly a true shekel or a close imitation (Fig. 4). But neither Postellus nor Waser seems to have known of the forgery with the censer.

Melanchthon, admirable scholar as he was, lived before the days of scientific numismatics ; and if he had one of

¹ *Linguarum duodecim Alphabetum* (Paris, 1538).

the censer-pieces before him, we shall not be unjust in supposing that he would identify it with the shekel as represented by Postellus. Otherwise it is difficult to understand how he would imagine that a censer was represented.

We may conclude, therefore, that the censer-shekel existed in 1552 A.D. That it was made much earlier the style of the work forbids us to believe.



FIG 5.

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